Penn Family Recipes, With an Account of the Life of Gulielma Maria Springett Penn, 1644-1694. Edited by Evelyn Abraham Benson. (York, Pennsylvania: George Shumway, Publisher, 1966. Illustrations, references and notes. $7.95.)

"Every known contemporary document concerning Gulielma Maria Penn has been mentioned in this modest biography. More would be conjecture."

Of 208 pages (exclusive of notes) only thirty-two are devoted to the life of the first wife of William Penn to whom he had written, "You are the Joy and Crown of my life above all visible comforts, allways valued by me and honored above women."

When Evelyn Abraham Benson makes a statement about sources we must accept it. She is an authority on original Pennsylvania colonial documents, having spent a lifetime in research. She has as well "a passion for accuracy." No matter how highly esteemed Gulielma was by her husband, contemporary material about her is very limited.

What we do have is fascinating reading. Gulielma lived in an age of "idealistic revolt." Her father, William Springett, who was a colonel in the Parliamentary army, died at the age of twenty-three. Her mother, Mary Proude, had been a rebel from her young girlhood. Guli's stepfather, Isaac Penington, was "another seeker — equally troubled by the eternal verities." In Quaker meetings Mary and Isaac found "the solace of the soul they sought."

With such a background it is easy to understand Guli's devotion to the Quakers. Unlike her militant mother, she was a gentle, lovely girl. She had many suitors. The editor with a delightful twist of the pen records that "the beauty of her person and character were, of course, of prime significance; but these gentlemen were not unaware that she was an heiress in her own right." Thomas Ellwood whose friendship for the Penington family spans a lifetime, reports that he, too, had some "sparklings of desire." He describes in detail the fair lady and some of her suitors and his own self-control lest his yearnings "rise above a fair and virtuous friendship."

It was not unusual for a devout Friend to travel about the countryside to attend meetings and to hear speakers. On one of these journeys sometime in 1668, reportedly in London, Guli met the man "for whom she was intended." He was William Penn. Both were twenty-four years old. During the next four years there must have been an exchange of letters and many visits to the Peningtons. No letter of Guli's survived; but William's show an increasing tenderness
for "my deare ffriend Gulielma Springett." He needed her encourage-
ment for he was beset with troubles. Undoubtedly the hardest to bear
was his father's anger and expressions of disappointment. Twice
William was turned out of his home; but in the end his mother's
influence prevailed.

Finally after having been imprisoned twice for street preaching,
having written a number of books and pamphlets, and having traveled
abroad, he returned to make arrangements for his marriage to
Gulielma. The promises were made at a meeting of Friends. The
wedding certificate (in Thomas Ellwood's handwriting) was dated
April 2, 1672, and was signed by forty-six witnesses including Lady
Penn and Gulielma's parents.

During his first year of marriage William left his young wife
with his mother while he continued to travel through the country to
preach and to debate. "Guli's anonymous spiritual influence upon
these best years in the life of William Penn cannot be calculated." In
July 1673 she accompanied her husband to Bristol to meet George
Fox who was returning from his American journey. As a result of
this association, the Penns caught the fire of his enthusiasm for a
Quaker refuge in America where good men could live together in
peace and equality. During three weeks in June 1677, when Fox made
his headquarters at the Penn home, "Worminghurst," the plans
must have been made for America. Guli was without doubt an active
participant. Fox had dreamed of a colony in America for twenty
years. Then the dream came true. On the fifth of March 1681, Penn's
title to a tract of land which the King named Pennsylvannia was con-
firmed under the Great Seal of England. The grant was a belated
payment of a debt owed by the Stuart family to Admiral Penn. The
Penns were jubilant. An outline for government was drawn up, tracts
of land were sold, and William prepared to set sail for America. There
were three small children in his family; his wife was expecting
another "little one"; her mother lay sick in the household; and Lady
Penn was dying. Guli's fortune as well as his was committed to the
project as surely as were her hopes. Many settlers were ready to
sail with the proprietor. His sailing could not be delayed. Regretfully
he left her. She must follow as soon as possible. "My dear wife . . . .
is sweetly consenting and satisfied." However, the birth and death
of her infant daughter, her subsequent weakness, an attack of St.
Anthony's fire (erysipelas), the care of the estates and of the old
prevented her from following.

August 1684 Guli wrote to Margaret Fox, "There have been
great reports of my husband's coming . . . . This puts a stop to my going.

Surely during the two years William spent in Pennsylvania, Guli must have written him as often as there was opportunity to send letters. Only one addressed to him exists and that one was never delivered to him. Three more letters, all to Margaret Fox, made up the whole body of material written by Gulielma Penn. In a time when everyone kept diaries or journals, when families and friends exchanged long letters, it is not possible that four letters are all that Guli ever penned. If the reviewer may indulge in conjecture, William must have destroyed all the documents of his first wife before he married his second. It is unthinkable that the estimable Hannah might be the culprit.

Evelyn Benson tells us that in the years following William's return, only three glimpses of Guli survive. She signed with her husband a character reference for an emigrant, bore a child (her eighth), and entertained "the Women's Quarterly Meeting of Sussex."

Undoubtedly she was deeply involved with her husband in Quaker business. There were political changes. Penn's friendship with the Stuarts threw his loyalty to William and Mary into question. His province was confiscated and a royal governor sent to Pennsylvania. He went into seclusion to avoid further public notice. "There can be no doubt that his serenity and peace of mind under the severe afflictions of public life were derived directly from the domestic felicity, unswerving loyalty, and spiritual harmony he found with his wife Gulielma."

In November 1693 the royal government gave Penn a full acquittal from the charge of treason. Six months later they were to restore his province. The dream of Pennsylvania was reborn, but Guli was too ill to profit by it. On February 23, 1694, "she quietly expired in my Arms, her Head upon my Bosom, with a sensible and devout resignation of her Soul to Almighty God."

Our editor quotes William I. Hull, who she says is William Penn's most scholarly biographer: "Gulielma lived long enough to rejoice with her husband over his acquittal but died six months before the restoration of his province. The loss of his wife cast a permanent shadow over his spirit; and from this time, despite his two public triumphs of 1693 and 1694, he entered into the clouds which enclosed the later years of his life."

This brief resumé of the life of Gulielma Penn can give no idea
of the charm of the original. Miss Benson has an easy literary style. As a biographer she stimulates in the lay reader a curiosity about people and events that is an exceptional achievement. One delights in such statements as that concerning Ellwood who, repressing his sparklings of desire for Guli, "payed court to a well heeled Quakeress." We are delighted to hear that Isaac Penington recommended Thomas Ellwood to John Milton as a Latin reader and agree with the supposition that Guli often visited the blind poet while he lived in her neighborhood. Miss Benson quotes copiously from letters and journals mentioning Guli, especially from those of Ellwood who writes vividly and in great detail.

Of course Guli is in the back of the book. The Penn Family recipes take precedence. In her own handwriting she kept a book of directions for the preparation of food for her family. Some of these recipes had come to her from her mother and grandmother. They had been copied "In great hast transcribed by Edward Blackfan the 25th of October 1702" so that young William Penn might take into the new colony his "mother's recepts for cookerys preserving and chyrurgery." A touch of home!

There are 144 recipes arranged into groups for the convenience of the reader — meats, baked goods, sweets, cheese. The facsimile pages of the original manuscript make the reader grateful for the arrangement into short lines resembling blank verse. The perusal becomes sheer delight, and wonder grows how any woman in the seventeenth century ever had time to leave her kitchen. The original spelling is retained. Copious footnotes clarify terms. There is not only an index of the recipes but one of herbs and seasonings, and one of utensils.

"Too Make Hagasyses [Haggis]" is the first recipe. It begins with "Take a calves gin or Chaldron, Ripe it and scour it well with salt, then par boyle—"; after ten more steps it concludes "a qr. of a pint of Rose water, 12 eggs, a Litell quantity of Creme, mingle them together—"

Amateur cooks could be driven mad by such instructions as "put not much butter in it," "boil the slyses until they be red enough," "a Litell yeist, a Litell salt," "Lett them boyle 3 or 4 walops." For cooks today even a "pinch of salt" is too indefinite. Many and strange were the ingredients: rose water, samphine, pinens, balm, St. John's wort, sanders are only a few. Basin, pipkin, rondelet, tiffany, tunn are far from familiar utensils. The scholarly and copious foot-
notes of the editor are certainly needed to make all intelligible. Certainly in Guli's day, cooks were born and not made.

The editor calls particular attention to one recipe for a dish familiar to us all.

To Make Harts Horn Jelly

Take 4 oz. of shavings of harts horne
one oz. of the shavings of Ivery.
Infuse it all night upon embers in a posett of Running watter.
With ½ a pound of Raisons of the sonne stoned,
With a Littell mace in an erthen pipkin,
in the morning boyle it up with a Litell saffron,
if you Like it a Littel Licorish and sum
opening Rooses,
and if you plese searching it with a Litell sugar.

Today's cook empties an envelope of powder into a bowl, adds two cups of boiling water, and stirs until dissolved. Both Guli and the modern housewife have gelatin for dessert.

Well might William Penn write, "remember thou wast the love of my youth and much joy of my life — the most beloved as well as the most worthy of my earthly comfrts." He might have added that she was a good cook, too!

Pittsburgh

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